

If the business cannot run without you for two weeks

A holiday, a hospital, a deal trip. If decisions stop when you leave the building, you do not have a board. You have a bottleneck with a job title.

Briefing

Owner-managers confuse presence with control. Presence is standing in every meeting. Control is a structure that takes a reserved decision without you. Until that exists, a Non-Executive Chair has nothing to chair.

The test

Leave for ten working days. Who signs what. Who can spend. Who speaks to the bank. Who tells a customer no. If the answer is “they wait for me”, the organisational structure is you. That is an MBA problem as much as a diary problem: design first, personality second.

What a Chair does with that

The first 90 days are not a strategy offsite. They are reserved matters, a short KPI set, and one meeting that happens whether you are in the country or not. Marketing and business strategy sit on that agenda only if they change the value of the firm. Campaigns stay with the executive.

What this is not

It is not a part-time CEO. It is not your accountant doing extra. It is not IPO in 5 unless you actually want PE or a listing inside five years — and then other specialists are brought in on purpose, unnamed on this site, for that mandate only.

If you run an SME within 100 miles of Bolton, or remotely, and the business still needs you in every room, enquire before the next absence. Twenty minutes. No retainer sold on that call. Your accountant can stay copied.